CLAIMS:

1. A method of providing a personalized broadcast service, characterized in that the method includes steps of:

(a) arranging for a content provider (40) to be coupled in communication with one or more user devices (30) and a broadcast service (50), the one or more user devices (30) being operable to present personalized programme content to their respective one or more users (20);

(b) receiving at the broadcast service (50) user profile information (100) from the one or more users (20); (c) receiving at the broadcast service (50) programme content indicative data (110) from the content provider (40);

(d) providing to the one or more devices (30) an a priori recording schedule (130) derived from at least one of the profile information (100) and the programme content indicative data (110);

(e) receiving programme content (140, 150, 160) at the broadcast service and the one or more user devices (30) and recording said received programme content at the one or more user devices (30);

(f) analyzing the received programme content at the broadcast service (50) to generate an a posteriori selection schedule (200);

(g) receiving the a posteriori selection schedule (200) at the one or more user devices (30) and processing the programme content recorded at the one or more user devices (30) pursuant to the a posteriori selection schedule (200) to generate the personalized programme content for presentation to the one or more users (20).

2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the programme content indicative data (110) includes at least one of electronic programme guide (EPG) data and its associated meta data.

3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the user profile information (100) is communicated to the broadcast service (50) by one or more of: via the one or more user devices (30), via a communication network such as the Internet, via a call centre, and by completion of one or more questionnaires at premises where the one or more user devices (30) are initially purchased.

4. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the broadcast service (50) is operable to construct the a priori recording schedule (130) by processing a list of available and receivable stations, and EPG data (110) including a corresponding list of temporally non-conflicting programmes.

5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the broadcast service (50) is operable to perform an analysis of programme content recorded thereat to generate the a posteriori selection schedule (200) for communicating to the one or more user devices (30).

6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein the analysis utilizes at least one of: speech recognition, keyword spotting, topic detection, music genre classification, image analysis, video analysis.

7. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the broadcast service (50) is operable to perform an analysis of user profile information to generate the a posteriori selection schedule (200) for communicating to the one or more user devices (30).

8. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the meta data (110) includes parameters relating to at least one of: genre classification, topic information and summaries, subjective ratings.

9. A method according to Claim 1 wherein the programme content is arranged to be communicated from the content provider (40) through relatively high bandwidth channels in step (e), and at least one of the user profile information (100) in step (a), the programme content indicative data (110) in step (b), the recording schedule (130) in step (d) and the selection schedule (200) in step (f) are arranged to be communicated through relatively low bandwidth channels.

10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein:

(a) said relatively high bandwidth channels include one or more of satellite broadcast, terrestrial radio wave broadcast, wide-bandwidth optical fibre broadcast, broadband Internet; and

(b) said relatively low bandwidth channels include one or more of radio wave communication, radio telephony, lower bandwidth optical fibre.

11. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the user profile information (100) stored at the broadcast service (50) is capable of being updated in response to feedback from the one or more users (20).

12. A communication system for distributing personalized programme content operable according to the method of Claim 1.

13. A user device (30) operable to function according to the method of Claim 1.

14. Personalized programme data content (220) generated according to the method of Claim 1.